

In Memoriam

---

Eugene W. Armfield

CB  
R72  
cop 2



**LIBRARY**

OF THE

**University of North Carolina.**

Endowed by the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies.

Q B

— H. R. —

C. O. F. R.

THIS TITLE HAS BEEN MICROFILMED

**This book must not  
be taken from the  
Library building.**









*E. M. Sanford*





In appreciative  
remembrance  
of  
Eugene Morehead Armfield  
this memorial  
is written



Blacksburg, S. C.,  
September 21, 1909.

To Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Armfield and Mrs.  
E. M. Armfield,  
High Point, N. C.

My Dear Friends:

In compliance with your request that I prepare a memorial volume of your lamented son and husband, I have sought to embody herein not only those facts of his life well known in a general way to the public, but also the generally unknown facts that betoken the finer qualities of heart and brain. Business activity was his conspicuous characteristic to the larger world, but in this memorial, which I here present, I seek to emphasize those characteristics known only to his inner circle and that endeared him to them. In so doing I am but paying just tribute to the memory of him whose friendship I valued, and whose name is held in high esteem by all who really knew him.

With great respect and personal esteem,  
I am,

Very sincerely yours,

G. F. KIRBY.

### FORE WORD.

We who know the "Light of the World" have a better faith than heathen devotee or ancient philosopher who die to live no more. Men left to themselves can not pierce the veil nor solve the mystery of life and death. To him who can not perceive the divine light that envelops the grave all is darkness and chill-dread. For us the author of light and life has robbed the grave of its victory and death of its sting. The incarnate God standing forth in resurrected power and glory proclaims man's immortality.

Whether in potter's field or rich mausoleum; whether in fathomless ocean or storied urn; whether sheltered by sculptured shaft or exposed to marauding beast, the dust of prince and peasant is in the keeping of him who holdeth all in the hollow of his hand. The dust of those we love is not all that is left to us. The memory of their good deeds and loving presence remains with us as a sweet aroma until our dust rests in the keeping of earth's bosom. The God who made us like himself is pleased with the love that builds the arch, that plants the flower, that inscribes the word, that drops the tear in fond memory of the loved one gone before.

### ABOU BEN ADHEM.

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)  
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,  
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,  
Making it rich, and like a lily in full bloom,  
An angel writing in a book of gold:

Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,  
And to the presence in the room he said,  
"What writest thou?"—The vision raised its  
head,

And with a look made of all sweet accord,  
Answer'd, "The names of those who love the  
Lord."

"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not  
so,"

Replied the angel. Abou spoke low,  
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee, then,  
Write me as one that loves his fellow men."

The angel wrote, and vanish'd. The next  
night

It came again with a great wakening light,  
And show'd the names whom love of God  
had bless'd,

And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Eugene Morehead Armfield was born in Guilford County, North Carolina, September twenty-fifth, eighteen hundred and sixty-nine at Saponaside, a country estate belonging to his father, Wyatt Jackson Armfield, the same being a part of the original grant of land to his ancestor, Joseph Armfield, more than one hundred years ago. Armfield is an honorable name not in Guilford County alone, but in other sections of the state as well. W. J., the father of E. M. Armfield, is a man of most sterling worth. In a long and successful business career he has always been noted as a man of transparent honesty; and while by industry and good business judgment he has succeeded in building up a large fortune, he has also preserved a character unspotted in its integrity to bequeath to those of his heart who may survive him.

Eugene was not less favored on his mother's side. His maternal great, great grandfather, Obed Britt, of Virginia, was of English-Welsh origin, but American in sentiment and in deeds. He threw himself wholeheartedly on the side of the colonists during the Revolution and served with loyalty and distinction throughout the entire struggle. During the earlier days of the Revolution he was with Washington in the North, but later came South under the command of

General Greene, where he was engaged in a number of battles. At Waxhaw, North Carolina, he received a wound from a sabre in the hands of a British soldier of which he was always proud. He was one of that gallant army which so stubbornly opposed the advance of the British at the battle of Guilford Court House, and his was the pleasure and privilege of witnessing the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. Soon after the close of the War of the Revolution Obed Britt was married to Miss Mary Smith, of Goochland County, Virginia, and to them were born two sons, Anderson and William, who were the great grandfathers of Eugene Armfield, for his grandfather, William O. Britt, married his cousin, Miss Mary Britt, daughter of William S. Britt.

Obed Britt, with his two sons, Anderson and William, moved from Virginia to Tennessee in the year eighteen hundred and eight, and amid the stirring events of early Tennessee history these two boys grew to manhood. They were engaged in the Indian wars of that period, and were with Jackson at the battle of New Orleans.

While the great, great grandfather and the great grandfathers were distinguished in the art of warfare, and served their country in two great wars, the grandfather, William O. Britt, was distinguished in the more peaceful pursuits of life, he being the leading business man in his section of the State of Tennessee.

Mrs. Jennie Britt Armfield, mother of Eugene Armfield, is a woman of rare qualities of heart and head, together with some degree of business sagacity inherited from her father, which she in turn transmitted to her son.

In men, as well as in other animals, "blood will tell," and with such a goodly heritage in this respect, the remarkable career of Eugene Armfield is not to be wondered at.

As a youth he was by nature fond of reading and study, and made great progress in the local schools and at Guilford College before entering the University of North Carolina. It was the ambition of his youth and early manhood to attain unto literary distinction, which ambition was nurtured in his early years by favorable home surroundings, and strengthened later by contact with men of literary tastes and attainments both at Guilford College and at the University. He possessed discriminating literary taste, and has always been, even when greatly engrossed in business affairs, a lover of good literature; but the ambition of his youth was never attained. Had he followed his early inclination for a literary career, there is no reason to doubt that he would have achieved success in this field of endeavor as he did in his chosen field of finance. Upon entering another field of activity of course his pursuit of literature became a secondary matter, but



he never lost interest in intellectual work, nor in the cause of education, and he contributed to the advancement of the latter cause both in money and in influence.

He had not the advantage of high class preparatory schools, yet he made such remarkable progress that at the age of seventeen he entered the Junior class of the University of North Carolina, and graduated two years later with the degree of Bachelor of Arts. After his graduation, yielding to the judgment of his father, he forsook his literary inclination, and entered upon a business career which in some respects has been quite remarkable. A few months after his graduation from the University he was elected Cashier of the First National Bank of High Point, which position he held for twenty years. He was quite young, it is true, to be placed in so responsible a position, but time proved that the Directors made no mistake in their choice. He was well equipped for this work, both through inheritance and in intellectual training, and he entered upon his work with that degree of energy and enthusiasm that brought large success to his institution.

His was an organizing genius and his vision of industry and commerce reached far beyond the somewhat narrow confines of High Point. First he desired to see his own town prosper in material things, but with almost equal intensity he desired to see all

other communities of his state prosper too. His organizing genius took shape in the organization, in other towns surrounding High Point, of what is known as the Armfield chain of banks, the location of which will be noted later on in this sketch. Nor did he stop at the establishment of these financial institutions, for he was a prime mover in the organization of many manufacturing and other enterprises that have largely contributed to the material making of High Point. He was ever ready to bring the splendid resources of his bank to the aid of any institution that was "making good," and he extended financial assistance to many corporations and individuals in time of great need.

So devoted was Mr. Armfield to his business and so absorbed in it that he found almost no time for things social, and remained a bachelor until he was thirty-seven years of age. On the sixth day of December, Nineteen hundred and six, he was married to Miss Bessie Cecil, daughter of Rev. C. A. Cecil, of High Point.

During his business career he was identified with the following industrial and financial institutions: Stockholder and Director, High Point Broom and Canning Company; Victor Chair Company; High Point Metallic Bed Company; Smith Furniture Company; High Point Trunk and Bag Company; Rankin Coffin and Casket Company; Lowe Trouser

Company; Lindsay Chair Company; High Point Overall Company. He was President of the High Point Mantel and Table Company; Grand Rapids Furniture Company; and Kearns Furniture Company. He was President of the High Point Real Estate and Trust Company; Secretary and Treasurer Southern Live Stock Insurance Company; Peoples Perpetual Building and Loan Association; Mechanics Perpetual Building and Loan Association; Treasurer Carolina Life Insurance Company and North Carolina Fire Insurance Company, both of High Point; Director Dixie Fire Insurance Company of Greensboro, North Carolina. He was Cashier of First National Bank of High Point; President Bank of Alamance, Graham, North Carolina, and also President Bank of Thomasville; Vice-President Peoples Savings Bank of Randleman, North Carolina. He was stockholder and director of the following banks: Bank of Montgomery, Troy, North Carolina; Bank of Raeford; Bank of Davie, Mocksville, North Carolina; Merchants and Farmers Bank of Marion, Marion North Carolina; Bank of Madison, Madison, North Carolina; Bank of Orange, Hillsboro, North Carolina; Commercial and Farmers Bank of Greensboro, North Carolina; American Exchange Bank, of Greensboro; and Bank of Caswell, Milton, North Carolina. All of these institutions

profited both by his wise counsel and large business connections South and East.

Successful as he was in the varied financial and industrial enterprises he yet found time to devote some attention to the cause of education. He was a member of the Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity while at college, and at the time of his death he was a Trustee of the University of North Carolina. His interest in his Alma Mater and in the young manhood of his state led him to endow the Armfield Scholarship in that institution with a gift of Six Thousand Dollars. He also made substantial contributions to the "Gore Memorial" Fund of the University of North Carolina, to the State Normal College at Greensboro, and to Elon College. Of all the investments made by him none are so enduring nor will ever bring in such valuable returns as the gifts to the cause of education. While he is dead his money thus invested is ever active in helping each year to fields of larger usefulness a half dozen or more worthy young men and young women, who, without this, might never find an opportunity for this preparation for life's work. He was a member of the Board of School Commissioners of High Point at the time of his death. His interest in the child life of our state was manifest in his contributions to, and active interest in, the North Carolina Children's Home Society, being Secretary of the organization. He was a member of the

Modern Language Association of America. The Pythian Knights and the Junior Order of United American Mechanics numbered him among their worthy members.

So conspicuous a figure in the financial, industrial and educational life of a state could not pass from this life without stirring unusual interest and emotion far beyond the confines of his own community, and the announcement of the death of Eugene M. Armfield brought sadness to the hearts of many who felt the greatness of their loss; and many distinguished men of the state, and a great throng of High Point citizens who knew and appreciated him, united in doing honor to his name.

---

### THE FUNERAL.

At ten o'clock on the morning of August thirteenth, Nineteen hundred and eight, the remains of Eugene Morehead Armfield was conveyed from his home on West Broad Street to the spacious auditorium of the South Main Street Graded School Building with a seating capacity of about one thousand and which was filled to its capacity. The active pall bearers were selected from the ranks of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics and were as follows: J. L. Sechrest, Robert Brockett, Dr. H. C. Pitts, J. E. Kirkman, W. A. Ring, T. H. Spencer, J. L. Parrish and J. G. Leonard.

The honorary pall bearers were: Dr. F. P. Venable, President of the University of North Carolina; F. C. Boyles, Cashier of the Commercial National Bank of Greensboro, North Carolina; Neil Ellington, President of the Greensboro National Bank of Greensboro, North Carolina; Professor N. C. English, of Trinity, North Carolina; W. G. Ragsdale, of Jamestown, North Carolina; J. D. Ross, of Asheboro, North Carolina; Prest. J. I. Foust, of Greensboro Normal College; Prest. W. T. Whitsett, Whitsett Institute, N. C.; J. G. Tomlinson, Troy, North Carolina; J. O. Ragsdale, of Madison, North Carolina; J. W. Lambeth and E. W. Cates, of Thomasville, North Carolina; and Dr. J. A. Turner, Lee A. Briles, M. J. Wrenn, O. E. Kearns, A. M. Rankin, N. W. Beeson, J. H. Tate, W. Ray Newby, all of High Point.

### AT THE AUDITORIUM.

The beautiful floral offerings were banked in front of the large platform and formed a lovely background for the casket in which lay all that was mortal of Eugene Armfield. According to the request of the deceased, the funeral services were conducted by Reverend G. F. Kirby, of the Methodist church. Mr. Kirby read scripture lessons from the Ninety-first Psalm and from the Fifteenth Chapter of First Corinthians, and announced Reverend O. L. Powers, of the Baptist Church, who prayed as follows:

#### Prayer.

Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place through all generations, before the mountains were brought forth or ever Thou hadst formed the earth or world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction and sayest, Return ye children of men, for a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is passed and as a watch in the night.

Lord, we come today mindful of Thy goodness and love. This to us is a mysterious and hard Providence; and yet we come not as the infidel or as those who would rebel and complain against Thee. We come with bleeding and broken hearts and with a feeling that Thou doest all things well. These things seem to be against us, but we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are

called according to His purpose. We are comforted in the thought that Thou art a Father who loves better than any earthly parent and that these afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Our Father, we remember the aged father and mother in our prayer. As they part to-day at the grave help them to look to the resurrection. May they be able to say with thy servant of old, The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Remember the widow in her affliction and loneliness, and be thou her companion and comforter. Pour into her bleeding heart the oil of Thy grace, and may it be sufficient for her every need. May she be able to say, The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want; yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

Bless sisters and brothers. Speak to their troubled hearts, and, in the absence of their brother, come Thou great elder Brother and fill his place. Shed the light of Thy wisdom and love over this Providence that they may see in it, God.

We pray for the unsaved, whether among the loved ones or in this great company of friends gathered here today to show their sympathy and love for the deceased friend.



O, God, speak Thou today to the thoughtless and careless, to the young and strong and may Thy message be, Prepare to meet thy God.

Again we pray that Thy glory may come out of this mysterious and sore Providence and that men may honor Thee more. Bless us and all the bereaved with Thy presence and companionship, we pray in Christ's name, Amen.

After a solo, "One Sweetly Solemn Thought," rendered by Mrs. G. F. Kirby, Mr. Kirby spoke as follows:

#### **Funeral Address.**

Eugene Morehead Armfield was no ordinary man. He was built after a large pattern; these statements being abundantly attested by his achievements. At the age of thirty-eight, when most men are just beginning to come into prominence, if prominent at all, he had already accomplished in his chosen field of activity, more than the larger part of men accomplish during a long life period. Coming to High Point a mere boy, not then having reached his majority, just twenty years ago, he has linked his name with a large number of successful enterprises that have done much toward making High Point a prosperous city. A long list of manufacturing institutions owe their origin to him while many more have received material assistance through him in time of need. Besides this he was financially interested in more than a dozen banks situated in as many towns in North Carolina, and was the moving spirit in the organization of most of them.

In the early morn one hears the shriek of

almost half a hundred whistles calling thousands to remunerative labor, who after the day is done return to their own homes, many of which have been built through Eugene Armfield's assistance, content and happy. If these whistles could pronounce the name of the man most responsible for their presence here, it would be that of Eugene M. Armfield.

His career has not been all prosperous; nor have his successes been scored as an easy mark. He had his battles to fight, and oftentimes they have been hard-fought battles.

He who sees only selfish, mercenary motives behind this remarkable business activity takes only a superficial view of the matter. Eugene Armfield's ambition was not to build a great fortune, but great fortunes; not to enrich himself, but to enrich his home town and the state that he loved; and I feel safe in saying that no **man** in North Carolina at the age of thirty-eight has done so much in this direction as he. There are men here who owe their start in life to him. The town and state are larger and better and more prosperous because of his ambition, and his brain, and his guiding hand. I believe he would have been supremely happy could he have been instrumental in enriching every friend whom he loved. If I be correct in my contention as to the cause of his consuming business activity, then certainly his labors

were directed toward worthy, yea noble ends.

Honest! No man ever doubted his honesty. During the latter days of last year we had a long, heart-open conversation together. During the course of this conversation I expressed to him my sorrow because of some recent business reverses which he had suffered. He turned to me and said, "Yes, Kirby, it is hard, but I can say, as one said many centuries ago," referring to Job, "I have kept mine integrity;" and I knew he had. He may have erred in judgment, but his hand never closed upon another man's dollar.

He did not pursue money for money's sake, but for the sake of turning the wheels of progress. He was a philanthropist of the truest type. There was no sounding of trumpets before him as he dispensed his gifts great or small. One who was much with him told me that never a beggar stood before the wicket of his bank and turned away empty-handed. Nor did he question why the need, but rather does my fellow man need, and does he need now.

Just outside of his cashier's wicket was a little cradle-bank bearing the picture of a little babe with outstretched hands, the property of the North Carolina Children's Home Society, of which he was a member. There it sat mutely appealing to all comers for help. For a long time, before I learned

to know him, I didn't think he cared about what went into the bank, but he did. At first, I did not think he cared for the young men of North Carolina, but he did to the extent of six thousand dollar to establish an endowment fund for six scholarships at the University of North Carolina. At first, I thought that he cared nothing for the young womanhood of North Carolina, but he did to the extent of a scholarship maintained for a number of years at the State Normal and Industrial College for Women at Greensboro. And just here, I wish to read some letters that have come into my possession since the death of my friend:

Chapel Hill, N. C., July 20, 1908.  
Mr. Eugene M. Armfield,  
High Point, N. C.

My dear sir—Please accept the thanks of the committee for your contribution to the Gore Memorial and for the kind expression of commendation of Prof. Gore's services.

With best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely,  
(Signed) LOUIS R. WILSON.

Elon College, N. C., June 22, 1908.  
Mr. E. M. Armfield,  
High Point, N. C.

My dear Mr. Armfield—I wish to thank you for the two-hundred-fifty dollar subscription made sometime ago to Elon College. I assure you that this kindness on your part is greatly appreciated, and the "investment" will bring in good returns, even in these hard times.

Cordially yours,  
(Signed) E. L. MOFFIT,  
President.

Chapel Hill, N. C., July 24, 1908.  
Mr. E. M. Armfield.

High Point, N. C.

Dear Mr. Armfield—I find of the men who held your scholarships last year Mr. B. L. Banks, Jr., Mr. J. B. Coghill, Mr. S. Singleary, Mr. J. B. Davis and Mr. J. W. Speas, graduated in June, the latter at the head of his class. He holds an assistant's place in Latin for the coming year. I am glad that these men all made such good records.

Very truly yours,  
(Signed) FRANCIS P. VENABLE.

Thus, through his beneficence Eugene Armfield helped and will continue to help to create a better citizenship in North Carolina. I thought he cared little for preachers, but on one occasion the officers of a little mission church at the close of its fiscal year lacked twenty dollars of paying up their pastor in full; one of these officers stood before his cashier's wicket, and said, "Mr. Armfield, we lack twenty dollars of paying up our preacher, can't you help us a little?" His reply was, "Willie, would you feel good if you had it all in hand?" and forthwith he handed him a check for the twenty dollars; and I was the preacher who endorsed that check. I didn't know that he cared for churches, but once a preacher of a mission church wanted to enlarge his church to meet the growing needs of his congregation and was trying to raise four thousand dollars. He had many subscriptions, among them several for one hundred dollars.

He showed the list to his friend Armfield and acquainted him with his plans and purposes. Mr. Armfield said, "I would like to give you more than any one has subscribed, but if you think it will make any one who has subscribed less feel bad, just put me down for one hundred dollars with the understanding that when you call on me for it, it shall be two hundred and fifty dollars." He sounded no trumpet before himself.

Up to the time of his last illness, at least, he did not profess to be a Christian of the orthodox type, but somehow in connection with the foregoing facts, my mind calls up that part of the Twenty-fifth Chapter of Matthew where Christ represents himself as saying to a part of the assembled hosts at the final day of judgment, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me." And when the Master was asked, When saw we thee in such condition and ministered unto Thee? He replied, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." At the right hand of the Master some will stand to testify, saying, Eugene Armfield clothed me,

fed me, educated me; and I am not sure that the good God stands much on orthodoxy.

What I have said about my friend is all good. The bad we leave unsaid forever. His sins were as open as most men's virtues are, but they go unrecorded for all time.

We know that toward the end he must have been feeling after the God he knew when a fifteen-year-old boy. A few days before leaving his office for the last time he asked his stenographer to take these lines; whether his own or another's I do not know; if another's the sentiment had become his own:

"When we drift away from the light of day,  
Like drift on a drifting stream,  
Shall we live again?

What matters it then if we sleep and have  
no dream,  
For life is trouble and life is care,  
With more of gloom than gleam,  
So when we drift away from the light of day,  
Let us plead and pray that sleep shall have  
no dream."

And again just before leaving his office for the last time, he said to his stenographer, "I'll not get well, I'll not return to my work. Pray for me," and quoted to her the last lines of "The Choir Invisible":

May I reach  
That purest heaven, be to other souls  
The cup of strength in some great agony:  
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,  
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty;  
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,  
And in diffusion ever more intense;  
So shall I join the choir invisible  
Whose music is the gladness of the world."

### **The Interment.**

At the cemetery The Junior Order of United American Mechanics was master of ceremonies, and the body was laid away in the family mausoleum with their beautiful ritual service. In the confines of this city of the dead all is solemn hush but in the near by city the shriek of whistle, the hum of machinery, the tread of busy feet, all bear witness to the energy and power and impetus given by his master hand and brain. From the fret and worry and turmoil and strife of life thou are free. Till the trump of God calls thee forth, rest ye.



### TRIBUTES.

The newspapers of his city and county and state, and many friends in private correspondence united in beautiful expressions of sympathy and appreciation, thus giving some degree of comfort to those whose hearts are sad.

#### Death of Leading High Point Citizen.

(Special to Charlotte Observer.)

High Point, Aug. 12.—Mr. Eugene Morehead Armfield died last night at his home on Broad street at 8.15 o'clock after an illness of two weeks from a serious liver trouble. Mr. Armfield was in a critical condition from the day he was taken to his bed.

Eugene Armfield was a man of many good qualities and many acts of kindness, many noble deeds of heart and hand, of which the world knew little, have been done by him. He was reserved in his ways and did not attempt at show and there are many who will read these lines who will reflect and lay a wreath of love and remembrance upon his bier today. The writer has known Mr. Armfield for twenty years and during that time recalls several instances when he displayed that inner feeling of brotherly love to his fellow man in a true sense. No trumpets proclaimed the deed but the hand and heart acted in response to the nature within. Mr. Armfield was a learned man, a brainy man in many respects. He was well up on literature and the arts and was a teacher to the pupil on most any question one may ask in ancient or modern history or matters of moment.

He died in the prime of his life, 39 years of age, and his untimely end causes the dark shadows of sorrow to fall across the hearth-

stone and reflect their sombre shadows over city and state where he has many friends.

(Southern Furniture Journal.)

In the death of Eugene Morehead Armfield the city of High Point sustained the loss of a citizen who figured most prominently in its upbuilding. He, more than any other man, assisted, with his ability and capital, the development of this southern furniture center. In his position as banker he did everything in his power for the advancement of the furniture industry and other enterprises that make this a commanding manufacturing center. He was invaluable not alone with money liberality, but with level-headed advice and unfaltering encouragement. Mr. Armfield was a man of splendid intellectual endowment, a brilliant North Carolina University graduate and a man of unusual public spirit and great capacity as an organizer. He was always a warm friend of the Southern Furniture Journal, and we esteemed him highly, and deeply mourn his death.

#### **"Gene" Armfield Dead.**

(From Fairbrother's Everything.)

It was sad news to his many friends, the announcement that "Gene" Armfield of High Point had gone to the other side. For some time his death was expected, but when it came a few days ago, many people were distressed. E. M. Armfield had for twenty years been a forceful character in the state of North Carolina; he was yet this side of forty, but he had done many things in the financial world which excited favorable comment.

Apart from his industrial enterprises and banking institutions he was a man who saw other things and had a humane side. He gave at one time \$6,000 as an endowment fund for the Library of English Philology of the University of North Carolina, his Alma Mater. He was also a trustee of that institution of learning and Secretary of the North Carolina Children's Home Society—a most worthy organization.

"Gene" Armfield had his friends—staunch and true, and like all positive characters had his enemies who inspired him to do greater things than he might otherwise have done. Being human he had his weakness as other human beings have had—but not all, he was a friend of the distressed; he was big-hearted and charitable even to those not charitable to him. The world is richer, because he lived in it, and his friends will long regret his departure.

## **THE STORY OF A FRIENDSHIP.**

**William Thornton Whitsett.**

Eugene Morehead Armfield was one of the most alert and eager students who gathered upon the classic grounds of the University of North Carolina at the opening of the college year in 1886. He had been in a most excellent school for some years and was well prepared to enter the Junior Class at the University. He was social, kind, and cordial in disposition, and broad and democratic in his ideas, and easily made friends among both teachers and students. Although he and I were both from Guilford County we had never met before, but within a few hours after our arrival upon the Hill

we were acquainted and a friendship began that continued without interruption until his untimely death. In many of the relations of college life we were thrown together intimately, and he is connected with many of the scenes and incidents that go to make the story of our college days.

His preparation for the University had been well done, and so he was not forced to struggle with his lessons as many were; however, he was regarded as a good student and was faithful to his class duties, seldom absent from any recitations, and always anxious to take a good stand in his work. He read much, and was fond of the better side of social life, and seemed to prefer this to taking the highest rank as a student, as he might have done, had he chosen to pay the price in toil and effort. His inclinations seemed to be along the line of literary pursuits, and most of his college friends were impressed with his love for literature, and his disposition to praise the leaders in the world of letters. He was even then debating in his mind as to whether he should join the ranks of those who strive for gold, or that lesser number who move the race through achievements in fields of mental endeavor. This was a long battle with him, and although he finally, after graduation, became a leader in his chosen field of business effort, still he never fully lost this early inclination to "follow knowledge like a sinking star, beyond the utmost bound of human thought." Even after graduation in 1883 he seriously considered a trip abroad and a stay of some time in Athens to indulge his taste for classic art and Grecian literature, but finally abandoned this thought to turn with all his strong, young manhood to the pro-

blems of finance and of business. He often discussed the influence of literature, and had a keen appreciation of what was best in both English and American literature; while his attainments in the classics gave him an insight into the treasures of past times.

We joined the Dialectic Literary Society together, and the noble and unselfish nature of Eugene Armfield was never better shown than in his frequent efforts to have his friends chosen for the honors offered by the society. Many who were members in those days will recall some of the struggles over society honors, and, doubtless, none of the boys of the days of '88 have yet forgotten the unusual contest over the election of representatives that year, resulting for the first time in the history of the University in the selection of four instead of three men, and no small part of this was due to the fact that Eugene Armfield had determined to have two of his friends as speakers that year. In "college politics" he was a quiet though powerful force.

When the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity was re-established in the University young Armfield was selected as one of the charter members, and never did Phi Gamma have a more loyal friend than he. On every proper occasion he delighted to uphold her banners, and was always ready with voice or purse to advance her interests. How the mind delights to turn again to those happy days of youthful dreams! The fraternity hall each week saw a happy gathering of congenial spirits Paul Chatham, Henry D. Ledbetter, Daniel J. Currie, and others now well known in the life of the State, and we never met

but that Armfield was one of the most interested "frats" of the entire gathering.

He was popular with the faculty, and was careful to throw the weight of his influence on the side of good order, and obedience to regulations; and so throughout his entire college course he preserved his standing as a good and faithful University man.

In June, 1888 he graduated and soon after this entered upon his career as a banker to which he devoted his life. He was successful beyond most men of his age, and rapidly rose in the confidence of the business world. I met him from time to time each year after leaving the University when he did, but was never again thrown with him for the same close personal contact that prevailed during our college days. Serving together on the Board of Trustees of the University he was always a helpful member, and his advice was often taken upon matters that came before that body. I recall many occasions when his ideas as to financial matters were finally accepted, and he was generally regarded as safe and sane upon matters of policy and finance that came before that body.

He was one of the earliest friends and organizers of the North Carolina Children's Home Society and he often spoke of the field that this and other like organizations occupied, showing his interest in the unfortunate and outcast.

As a good busneiss man he was prudent and seemingly careful, but it was generally understood by all his friends that no worthy cause would be overlooked in its hour of need if the attention of Eugene Armfield was called to it.

He often felt, like most men of capacity, that he had failed in the exercise of his largest possible capacity for usefulness, and in his conversation there was often a tinge of sadness in that he had not done all he might have done in life. His days were not free from mistakes and errors; but those who knew him best always felt that in mental grasp and wide sympathy with many lines of life Eugene Armfield was one of the strong men of his time.

His Alma Mater, the University of North Carolina, was ever dear to his heart; and his gifts to establish better work in the department of English came at a time that the University was greatly helped. He would have done much more along this line if he had lived.

As I write these lines in his memory my every thought goes back to the days of boyhood! Eugene died long before his time.

"For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,  
Young Lycidas."

Again I recall him, as I often saw him, mingling with affectionate consideration among the members of his cultured family. I see him at Saponaside, his father's country home upon the banks of Deep River, nestling amid its stately trees and evergreens, Eugene the first born of the family, the pride of his parents, one of the leaders in a home life that was all that wealth and culture could make it. He loved his dear ones at home, and I have often heard him speak with a tenderness of his father and mother that could have come only from a heart filled with affectionate regard.

As I have said I did not keep in close touch with my friend during the later years

of his life, and know nothing of the details that crowded his days during the years immediately preceding his death. But my mind loves to dwell upon the scenes of his earlier days. His graduation; the gift from his parents of an elegant watch; his earlier successes in business; the day when life held for him much of its charm and romance; when castles were being builded beyond the hills of the-days-to-be; these, and a thousand other scenes come before me. If my friend ever found the years to break faith with his earlier dreams, still I delight to think that he had these dreams; bright, vivid, and amid all the dross of days, I still believe undying in brightness.

"When dreamy youth departs  
It steals something from our hearts,  
And it never comes again."

His grasp upon his friends was never better shown than on the day of his burial. The spacious hall of the largest auditorium in his native city scarce could hold the crowd that came to pay a last sad tribute to his memory. The President of the University, the President of the State Normal College, leading teachers, ministers, editors, and business men from various sections, all were gathered to testify that they in some measure had been influenced or helped by Eugene Armfield's life, or because of some good deed of his had come to pay a last tribute to his memory.

His generous heart is still forever, and near the scene of his life's activities he now rests in the silence of the City of the Dead. In the name of a friendship that was unbroken for twenty years I lay this humble tribute upon his tomb.



## IN MEMORIAM.

(A. A. Young.)

There is no death—'tis but a long, last sleep  
In preparation for an endless life. Why  
weep?

Their sorrow's o'er, no more their burdens  
bear;

They're waiting now for us. They vigil  
keep.

There is no death—naught in this world  
e'er dies.

Men live again in happier homes beyond  
the skies.

Waiting the Judgment Day. When all shall  
know

Their friends once more whom they have  
left below,

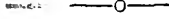
But who will meet them when the dead  
shall rise.

There is no death—in Paradise there'll be  
Nothing but joy and peace. Then when  
eternity

Shall dawn, and the Great Judge shall come  
To call the ransomed sinners to their home;

We'll know there is no death—'tis the soul's  
liberty.

## RESOLUTIONS.



(Kearns Furniture Company.)

The following resolutions were adopted by the board of directors of the Kearns Furniture Company at a meeting held August 25th, 1908.

Whereas, It has pleased our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom to remove from our midst our president, E. M. Armfield, therefore be it

Resolved, First, That while we bow in humble submissoin to the wise and unerring dispensation of Providence, yet in the death of E. M. Armfield, the directors have lost a most valuable and efficient member and the company a wise and capable president.

Resolved, Second, That the company deeply deplores its loss and extends to the bereaved family and relatives its deepest sympathy.

Resolved, Third, That these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of the company, a copy furnished the family of the deceased, and the High Point Enterprise for publication.

G. A. Matton,  
G. H. Kearns,  
W. C. Jones.

(Bank of Randolph.)

Asheboro, N. C., Jan. 14, 1909.

Mrs. Bessie Armfield,

High Point, N. C.

Dear Madam:

At the annual meeting of the stockholders of the Bank of Randolph, the following

resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, since our last annual meeting, an All-Wise Providence has seen fit to remove from among us Eugene M. Armfield, a shareholder and director in this bank since its organization; and, whereas, we desire to express our appreciation of his efforts in helping to start this institution, and his continuous interest and zeal for its success, as well as our appreciation of him as a prominent citizen of our State.

Resolved, First, That in his death, in the zenith of his usefulness, this bank has lost a valuable member and director, each member a true and loyal friend, and the State a bright and noble son.

Resolved, Second, That these resolutions be spread upon the minutes and that copies be sent to his family and to the Courier and Bulletin and High Point Enterprise for publication.

T. H. Redding, Secretary.

(Peoples Savings Loan and Trust Co.)

Whereas, death has visited and removed president, Eugene M. Armfield, therefore be it

Resolved, by the officers and board of directors of the Peoples Savings Loan and Trust Co., of Randleman, N. C., that as a tribute of respect we close the bank during business hours August 12th. That we greatly deplore his untimely death, having recognized him as one of the State's leading business men. We cherish his memory. That a copy of these resolutions be sent his be-

reaved family, High Point Enterprise, and a copy be spread upon the minutes of this institution.

JOHN J. NEWLIN,  
President.  
Wm. H. PICKARD,  
Cashier.

(North Carolina Savings Bank & Trust Co.)

At a called meeting of the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Savings Bank and Trust Co., held August 13th, 1908, a committee was appointed to draft resolutions on account of the death of E. M. Armfield.

The committee reported the following, which were unanimously adopted by the board:

Whereas, it has pleased an All-Wise Providence to remove from us by death E. M. Armfield, a member of this body.

Therefore, be it resolved that in his death this board has lost a faithful co-laborer and wise counselor, the city of High Point a citizen whose loyalty and devotion to her financial and manufacturing interests has been conspicuously intense and unselfish, the State of North Carolina one of her most patriotic sons, the cause of education a strenuous supporter, and the unfortunate a friend of unostentatious and wholehearted liberality.

Resolved further; That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our minutes, published in our city paper, and a copy be sent to the family of the deceased.

S. L. DAVIS,  
P. H. JOHNSON,  
L. M. H. REYNOLDS,  
Committee.

(Chamber of Commerce)

At a meeting of the directors of the Chamber of Commerce, Tuesday evening, August 18, the following resolutions were presented by the committee and unanimously adopted:

Whereas, the Almighty Father in his infinite wisdom, has taken from us Eugene Morehead Armfield, a loyal and valuable member of this organization,

Be it resolved, That in his death this organization has lost a valuable member, its members a lovable companion, High Point and Guilford County a public spirited citizen, and North Carolina one of her most patriotic sons;

That in him mankind had a friend and helper, the cause of education a wise counselor and philanthropist, the finances of this community a rock of safety, and our industrial and mercantile institutions a constant source of encouragement.

That a copy of these resolutions be published in the High Point Enterprise, and a copy be furnished Mrs. E. M. Armfield.

O. E. Kearns,  
Robt. Brockett,  
Thos. J. Gold,  
Committee.

(North Carolina Fire Insurance Company.)

At a meeting of the board of directors of the North Carolina Fire Insurance Company held in the office of said company in High Point, August 18th, 1908, and a committee being appointed to draft certain resolutions relating to the death of Eugene M. Armfield, secretary and treasurer of said

company, the following resolutions were drafted by said committee:

Whereas, Our Heavenly Father in His wisdom, has removed from our midst our very efficient secretary and treasurer, Eugene M. Armfield, one to whom we could always look for counsel in time of need. Now therefore be it

Resolved, That in the death of our esteemed brother this committee has lost a valuable counselor and a lovable companion, and the North Carolina Fire Insurance Company it's originator.

That in him all men found a friend and helper. Having a broad mind he was interested in many lines of business, with seemingly, but one object, the betterment of mankind, the helping of others. Though we miss him, we hope our loss is his eternal gain.

That a copy of these resolutions be published in the High Point Enterprise and a copy furnished the family, and the wife of said deceased and the resolutions be spread upon the minutes of said company.

W. N. ELDER,  
J. M. MORRIS,  
Committee.

(Guilford Council Junior Order of United American Mechanics.)

The following resolutions were adopted by Guilford Council No. 23, Jr. O. U. A. M., August 14, 1908:

"Whereas, it has pleased our gracious Heavenly Father in His infinite and unerring wisdom, to remove from our midst our

brother, E. M. Armfield, member of Guilford Council, No. 23, therefore be it

Resolved, First, That while we bow in humble submission to the wise dispensation of an over-ruling Providence in the death of E. M. Armfield, the Council loses a good member, and the County and State a good and valuable citizen.

Second, That this Council deeply deploras its loss and extends its deepest sympathy to the bereaved family and relatives.

Third, That these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of our Council, a copy furnished the High Point Enterprise and The Watchman for publication, and also given the family of the deceased.

Fourth, That the charter of our Council be draped for a period of thirty days.

D. C. ALDRIDGE,

T. H. SPENCER,

J. E. KIRKMAN,

Committee.

(Bank of Thomasville.)

At the annual meeting of the stockholders of the Bank of Thomasville, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, Almighty God has seen fit to remove from us, since our last annual meeting, Eugene Morehead Armfield, founder, president and director of this bank since its organization, and whereas, in his loss we desire to express our great appreciation of all the efforts he put forth in helping to start this institution and making it attain the wonderful success it has, and is having, his untiring interest and zeal for its welfare, we desire to express our sincere appreciation of him as one of the

brightest, and one of the most prominent citizens our State has produced. As a financier he had no superior, and his judgment could always be relied upon. To enumerate all that he did to advance the business interests of this State would require a volume; it sufficeth to say he did all he could do to aid in every legitimate way in the development of the commercial interests of the State.

Resolved, That this Bank has lost a valuable officer, by his death, just in the prime of life, every stockholder in this bank a true and loyal friend, and the entire State one of its most intelligent, useful and promising sons.

Resolved, that these resolutions be placed on the minutes of this bank, that copies be sent to the bereaved family, and a copy be sent to the newspapers for publication.

S. H. AVERETT,  
CHAS. R. THOMAS,  
Committee.

(Bank of Montgomery.)

At the annual meeting of the stockholders and directors of the Bank of Montgomery, Troy, N. C., held on the 15th day of January, 1909, a committee of two, to-wit: Mr. A. W. E. Capel and Chas. A. Armstrong, was appointed to draft suitable resolutions of respect to the memory of E. M. Armfield, deceased.

Whereas, It has pleased the Supreme Ruler of the Universe to remove from us our esteemed and beloved friend, E. M. Armfield, who was a stockholder and director in this bank, and who departed this life on the 11th day of August, 1908, and

Whereas, It is our desire to add a tribute of respect to the memory of our deceased



friend and business associate, therefore, be it resolved:

First, That in the death of E. M. Armfield, the State, and particularly the community in which he lived, lost a splendid, high-minded, public-spirited, and benevolent citizen; one who exemplified in his daily life the principles which we all hold so sacred: friendship, charity, benevolence and business enterprise; and while the untimely death of this splendid citizen has filled our hearts with grief and sorrow, we bow in humble submission to Him, "who doeth all things well."

Second, That we tender the sorrowing father and mother, wife, brothers and sisters, and other relatives our deepest sympathy; and realizing how inadequate words are to heal afflictions like this, we point them to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for the consolation which we cannot give.

Third, That these resolutions be spread on the minutes of the Bank of Montgomery and a copy of the same be sent to the father and mother, wife, brothers and sisters of the deceased.

A. W. E. CAPEL,  
CHAS. A. ARMSTRONG,  
Committee.

**Resolutions of the Board of Trustees of the  
University of North Carolina on the  
Death of Eugene Morehead Armfield.**

The trustees wish to place on record their sense of loss at the death of Eugene Morehead Armfield and their appreciation of his services.

He was an alumnus of the University of North Carolina of the class of 1888 and for seven years a member of this body. Dur-

ing this time he has been faithful in attendance upon his duties and helpful in counsel. Two years ago the legislature renewed his appointment upon the board.

In 1903 he was appointed by the Governor a member of the Visiting Committee and discharged efficiently and well the duties connected with the position.

He has always been a loyal and devoted son of the University, and the Trustees would express again their appreciation of his generous gift to the library in endowing the section of English Philology.

Therefore be it resolved:

First, That in the death of Eugene M. Armfield the Board of Trustees and the University have suffered the loss of a helpful counselor and a faithful friend.

Second, That the Trustees tender to his wife and family their sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

Third, That this Memorial be spread upon the minutes and that a copy be sent to his family.

R. T. GRAY,

JOSEPHUS DANIELS.

#### **Resolutions of the Faculty of the University of North Carolina.**

The death of Mr. Eugene Morehead Armfield on August 11, 1908, was felt by the faculty of the University as the loss not only of a friend and co-worker but of one whose efficient loyalty has meant a permanent enrichment to the life of his alma mater.

In his benefactions to the University Library Mr. Armfield proved himself an exemplar of that method of beneficence by which an institution can be most wisely and

most efficiently served. While still living he gave an adequate sum for the endowment of a particular department of the University and he lived to see his example become the basic idea for the increasing endowment of a great Library whose widening service will perpetuate not only his gift, but the generous thought that prompted it. The new Library as equipped and endowed for its larger work is in a peculiar sense the result of a movement to which he gave both form and direction.

Resolved, therefore, First; That in the death of Mr. Armfield the State has lost one of its ablest industrial captains, one of its gentlest and most lovable men, one of its most philanthropic citizens, and one of its most potent influences for the upbuilding of a wisely directed educational sentiment.

Second, That the University of North Carolina will honor the memory of Mr. Armfield as an alumnus whose enlightened generosity brought added renown to his alma mater, increased power to do good, and set an example of constructive loyalty that the University will forever remember with gratitude and affection.

C. ALPHONSO SMITH,  
LOUIS R. WILSON.

A memorial tribute to one loved and passed away is a very inadequate expression of the depth of love and esteem that prompts the writing, but it is gratifying to those whose hearts are sorest. It is hoped, however, that this may prove of benefit to some whose eye may chance to fall upon these pages. One's good and bad is known to those whose lives are contemporary, and who are associated closely in business and otherwise. May the virtues here recorded excite the admiration of those who look for examples of generous kindness, and thus prove a lasting blessing to those who read. May the achievements of one yet young in years be an incentive to those who would leave the impress of their character upon the world.













